

Despite the fact that the government of Turkmenistan is a signatory to the Helsinki Accords and other international agreements, officials have blatantly violated Mr. Atakov's and other individuals' rights to freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, and the freedom of assembly.

Before KNB officials, that is the new name for the KGB, arrested Mr. Atakov, they, along with local religious community leaders, told him if he converted back to his previous religion, he would receive a car, a house and a good job, a great offer in a country like Turkmenistan where people make approximately \$40 per month.

However, these community leaders and security officials made it clear that if Mr. Atakov refused this offer, they would "find" charges against him and ensure that he was imprisoned. Over a 2-month period, various officials visited Mr. Atakov to repeat this offer and threats. In one of the visits, secret police officials said he would be imprisoned and "we will quickly force you into silence."

The KNB secret police have tried to silence Mr. Atakov in prison. Reports show that in July of 1999 and March of 2000 Mr. Atakov was forced into the special punishment cell in which he was severely beaten by guards, denied water, and fed only every other day. His family saw him at the end of the 10 days in 1999, and they reported that he was barely alive.

In July of 1999, it was reported that President Niyazov gave Mr. Atakov presidential amnesty, as allowed under Section 228 of the criminal code; but for some strange reason, security officials did not release him. Instead, they put him in the punishment cell described above.

In fact, because of the pressure from the prosecutor, who said the previous sentence was too lenient, a new trial was held in August of 1999; and Mr. Atakov was sentenced to 4 years in prison and fined \$12,000. That is an amount equivalent to about 25 years of salary for the average Turk citizen.

Since February of this year, KNB officials forced his family into internal exile, the principal has kicked his children out of school, his wife has been told she will remain in exile until she renounces her faith, Mr. Atakov's brother was arrested and tortured in April of 1999, and other family members have lost their jobs and suffered as well.

In December of 1999, during a raid on a Russian family living in Turkmenistan, KNB officials told them, "First we will deport all of you foreign missionaries, then we'll strangle the remaining Christians in the country."

All of this government attention to one man and his family simply because of religious beliefs.

This injustice is an outrage. The tactics of the KNB show that the KGB forces and methods of operations did not disappear with the demise of the

Soviet Union, but are still alive and well. The arrest and subsequent imprisonment of Mr. Atakov are not isolated events, but are a result of the KNB secret police policy in Turkmenistan.

In 1997, the legislature adopted severe restrictions on religion, imposing compulsory re-registration of all religious communities. According to the legislation, a religious community must have at least 500 members before it can obtain registration. Without this legal status, all religious groups are considered illegal and their activities therefore are punishable under the law.

Since June of 1997, the secret police have detained, interrogated and physically assaulted many religious believers. In addition, these officials have raided churches, interrupted worship services, searched homes and confiscated over 6,700 pieces of literature. In each instance, the KNB warned citizens that the Christian faith in particular is forbidden in Turkmenistan.

Religious believers throughout Turkmenistan suffer if they practice their religion but do not belong to either of the two "registered" religions. One is the Islamic faith, the other is the Russian Orthodox.

Mr. Speaker, I recently received reports that Mr. Atakov's health has deteriorated rapidly and he may be at the point of death. I urge the government of Turkmenistan to allow an international organization, such as the Red Cross, to visit Mr. Atakov, assess his health, and provide any medical assistance he might need. Even, I might say, the old ruthless Soviet regime allowed prisoners medical health.

I urge the government of Turkmenistan to live up to its commitments under the Helsinki Accords and other international agreements to uphold and to protect freedom of speech, assembly and belief.

Further, I urge the government of Turkmenistan to release Mr. Atakov under their own president's amnesty granted to him last year.

Finally, I urge the government to stop harassing and persecuting people of faith and recognize their important and rich contribution to their nation.

ALLOWING REFERENCE TO RETIRING MEMBER OF OTHER BODY DURING MORNING HOUR DEBATES TOMORROW

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members be permitted to refer to a retiring Member of the other body in tributes during morning hour debate tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING IMPORTANCE OF SELECTIVE SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr.

KUYKENDALL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, for many of us about my age, when you turned 18 you went off and registered for the draft. I happen to have come of age during the Vietnam War, so it was very controversial. But last Thursday, I introduced House Concurrent Resolution 402, which recognizes the importance of the Selective Service System on the occasion of its 60th anniversary of a peacetime military registration effort.

It was first passed on September 16, 1940. I believe that willingness and tradition of America's citizens to defend not only their homeland, but also the very precept of freedom throughout the world, is the cornerstone of what makes America the greatest Nation on Earth.

The Selective Service System serves as a reminder to many in the world that America's young men stand ready to continue in the tradition of protecting democracy. As a result of the Vietnam era draft, some feel we should abolish it. Others feel we should not fund it during times of peace. And with all due respect to those Members, I disagree with them.

But the bill that I introduced is not anything to do with those two controversial subjects. The bill seeks to honor America's Selective Service System and recognize the historical role it played in America's history, especially during the past 60 years.

But before that last 60 years, what was the history of the draft in America? It began in the Civil War, and during that time, we conscripted people, and the way you got out of it was you provided a replacement. You had to go find someone to stand in your stead. It ended after the Civil War.

Again, when America went to war in World War I, we passed the Selective Service Act of 1917, and it provided for a general conscription. We even had a clause in that one, for the first time, that talked about exemptions for conscientious objectors. By the time the war ended, we had inducted 2.8 million men.

Then, during World War II, we bring ourselves to the time that we end up recognizing the anniversary of, that the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 established the first peacetime, I stress peacetime, conscription; and it was in response to all the tension in the world at that time. You could imagine, we had had Germany recently invade Poland; the Japanese were on the march in the Pacific.

The service obligation was originally 12 months. It was quickly changed to 18 months in 1941. By the end of that war, we had conscripted over 10 million men, and the world had been made peaceful again.

Following that, in 1948, we continued conscription; and we continued registration, and we said anyone between the ages of 18 and 26 be available for service as we then entered that era of the Cold War.